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This document consists of 1 page, Series A, Pages 1

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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MEMORANDUM

TO: G/PM - Mr. Jeffrey C. Kitchen

FROM: G/PM - Seymour Weiss

SUBJECT: Berlin

1. There is to be a White House meeting late this afternoon to decide what to do about the latest Friedrichstrasse border-closing incident. My guess as to probable action: nothing.

3. I have attached two documents in the Berlin Task Force series which, I think, you will find of interest. (Incidentally, the flow of paper produced by the Task Force is staggering and I have taken it upon myself not to forward to you 99% of it.) The first, Tab A, presents a current intelligence assessment of Soviet intentions, this being a continuation of the project which Alex launched at our suggestion some time ago. The assessment of Soviet intentions on page 2 is interesting. The second document, Tab B, gives some indication of the direction in which the European Security Study is moving.

Attachments:

- (A) Memo re Assessment of Current Soviet Intentions in the Berlin Crisis: Oct. 17-24
- (B) Memo re European Security and Surprise Attack

G/PM: SWEISS:ppp

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Bureau of Intelligence and Research

Research Memorandum  
RSB-37, October 24, 1961

(2)

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THE BERLIN CRISIS:  
OCTOBER 17-24

DEVELOPMENTS OF THE WEEK

Negotiations. In his opening address to the 22nd CPSU Congress on October 17, Khrushchev stressed the desirability of a negotiated settlement of the Berlin-Germany question. Following the initiative taken by Gromyko, Khrushchev stated — for the first time publicly — that the Soviet Union would not insist on the year-and-a-half deadline for a peace treaty, but would show a "readiness to settle the German problem." Khrushchev reiterated but did not dwell on or elaborate the separate treaty threat, stating merely that "a German peace treaty will be signed, with the Western powers or without them." Despite his general references to a "mutually acceptable solution," — a formulation which seemed to indicate some flexibility on a conference agenda as well as a desire not to commit the USSR to a specific solution — Khrushchev gave no sign of flexibility on the terms for a negotiated settlement and did not outline the (level, participants, agenda) of a conference. Considering the nature of the occasion, Khrushchev's failure to spell out details was not surprising. Much more significant was his terms of cultivating a climate for negotiations and justifying his own position on negotiations to a communist audience, was his generally positive appraisal of Gromyko's recent round of talks in New York, Washington, and London.

At the CPSU Congress, the German question was largely overshadowed by the Soviet-directed chorus of condemnation of the Albanian leadership, which also constituted an indirect attack on Communist China. Generally speaking, the congress has strongly reaffirmed the flexible and relatively moderate foreign policy line proclaimed by the 20th CPSU Congress in 1956.

Military Preparations and Demonstrations. Although he refrained from linking his statements on the military superiority of the Soviet bloc directly to the Berlin crisis, Khrushchev's remarks were obviously intended to be understood in that context. He announced that the Soviet Union would test a 50-megaton bomb (on October 23 the Soviets tested a weapon with a yield somewhere between 30 and 50 megatons), had a 100-megaton bomb, had enjoyed success in its Pacific Ocean missile tests, and was building a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines armed with both ballistic and target-homing missiles. Malinovsky added to the catalogue of destroying rockets in flight and that the USSR had solved the problem of destroying rockets in flight and that the Soviet missile firing submarines have learned to move under Arctic ice in order to take up firing positions.

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Czechoslovakia followed Moscow's example of extending the tours of duty for some troops. (Bulgaria, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland have already done the same.)

The lull in the Warsaw Pact maneuvers continues. So far no evidence has appeared that the expected large-scale ground maneuvers are imminent. The bulk of the Polish units present in the GDR earlier this month have been withdrawn.

Each publicized action in the Western military buildup is reported by Moscow, but with little comment. However, the general idea of the Western military buildup continues to be played up in bloc apologetics on the Soviet resumption of nuclear testing.

Berlin and Germany. Soviet handling of the Friedrichstrasse checkpoint incidents (in which US cars whose occupants in civilian clothes refused to show ID cards when through with military escorts) seemed to show a desire to improve relations with the US on the Berlin scene, or at least stem further deterioration. However, whether this initial response represented the final Communist position remained to be seen.

#### ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET INTENTIONS

Khrushchev's relatively moderate statements on Berlin and Germany once again indicate Moscow is eager to negotiate and hopes to achieve its ends through negotiations. Khrushchev's aim seemed to be to encourage a climate for negotiations, without giving the appearance of weakness or overwillingness to ease his demands.

Khrushchev's speech will probably set the tone and manner of the Soviet approach to the Berlin problem in the near future. This does not mean, however, that Moscow will refrain from threatening language and gestures when it deems these necessary to hasten the convening of negotiations or to improve its negotiating posture.

Barring a quick Soviet victory over the Albanians and Chinese, Moscow will be preoccupied with intra-bloc quarrels in the weeks to come. This preoccupation may divert its attention away from East-West issues. The Soviets will not relent in pressing the Berlin issue, but they may be willing to settle for less than they would have before.

Viewed in perspective, the CPSU Congress seems likely to produce a shift in Soviet foreign policy in the direction of a more flexible, less militant approach than has been the case in recent months. Whether this will have any effect on the immediate question of Berlin remains to be seen; there is certainly no suggestion of compromise on basic issues.

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European Security and Surprise Attack

Following is a list of points concerning the subject, which appear to report a consensus of the points which have been agreed for raising in the Quadripartite Study Group on October 26. Primary considerations relating to each point are set forth briefly.

This paper is circulated as a basis for further study within the U.S. element of the Study Group.

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6. Measures to Reduce the Dangers of Surprise Attack and Accidental War.

Following have been suggested: inspection zones, advance notification of major military movements or activities, exchange of military missions.

These proposals are not designed to limit forces or weapons as such, or inhibit their deployment. On the positive side they could "tip off" preparation for massive ground surprise; could tend to break down secrecy and reduce tensions; could be "trial-run" for techniques and measures to be later employed in development arms control and disarmament programs.

On the negative side looms the problem of discrimination if the proposals relate only to Europe, or more particularly West Germany. Inspected inspection zones offer little protection.

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-3-

against long-range nuclear attack. In general, measures of this sort could lead to a false sense of security, and in the negotiations the Soviets would surely push toward disengagement, de-nuclearization, etc. In any event, inspection should cover all facets - ground, sea and air and West on basis Korea experience should not expect to risk too much.

It is suggested that the U.S. be prepared to have proposals for measures that are applicable to areas other than Europe, preferably the U.S. and the USSR themselves.

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